



June 2024 Newsletter

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KMPUD Community Information - Did You Know ... ?

The District's water distribution system consists of approximately five miles of pipelines in the Kirkwood Valley, ranging from six to ten inches in diameter.

REMINDER - Kirkwood Summer Festival



The Kirkwood Summer Festival is just a few weeks away.

This event is the main fundraising community event for the Kirkwood Volunteer Fire Department (KVFD), attracting 500-700 attendees each July since 1978. The generosity of our community over the years has enabled KVFD to purchase protective gear and life-saving equipment for our volunteer firefighters as well as a new fire engine in 2023! This year, we hope to raise funds to support staffing, training, and outfitting the new engine. These are crucial items needed to protect the Kirkwood community.

In an effort to raise money and have some fun, the 2024 Kirkwood Summer Festival is returning Saturday, July 6, 2024, from 4:00pm to 7:00pm on the Plaza featuring great food, beer, wine, mocktails, live music by Sean Lehe Trio and Sgt. Splendor Band, games, auction, and more.

There will be a Memorial Table honoring Anne O'Grady. You are invited to stop by and share a few words.

If you haven't already, mark your calendars and join the fun arranged by the Summer Festival Committee.

To Purchase Tickets, Donate, or Bid on the Auction

Click here: <https://givebutter.com/c/nRUVmt>

Meet the Kirkwood Utilities Team

By Chris Tucher, KMPUD Board Member

This is the first of what we expect to be a series of profiles of some of the people who make Kirkwood utilities work.

The KMPUD board is pleased to announce that General Manager Erik Christeson has agreed to extend his contract for another three years through 2027.

Erik has been at the helm of KMPUD for seven years and has overseen important improvements both in the reliability of our utilities and financial soundness.

Kirkwood has unique appeal — mountains, skiing, scenic beauty — but it presents a unique challenge in recruiting a top-notch GM. First, of course, is our remote location. Erik commutes most days, but owns a condominium in Kirkwood for when work or weather requires him to stay close. Second, "utility" at Kirkwood has a uniquely broad scope. Most utility executives oversee electricity and gas, and often water and wastewater as well. At KMPUD the job includes all of the above, plus snow removal, the volunteer fire department, parks, and solid waste removal. All of this at 7,800 feet elevation!

"When I attend conferences or talk to other executives and compare notes with my peers, I have yet to see another utility district with our breadth of services," says Erik. "They're often stunned when they hear all that we do, and with such a small staff."

But it's that broad scope that Erik finds most appealing about the job. "It is never boring."

When asked what part of Kirkwood utilities is in strongest condition, Erik points to electric transmission. Thanks to the connection we completed 10 years ago to tie into the California regional grid, Kirkwood now has clean, reliable power for homes and chairlifts, and for future growth. Combined with our backup generators, our entire community is never without power. When asked what most concerns him, he points to our aging distribution and collections systems: water and wastewater pipes and underground electrical wires that lack conduits. "Deferred maintenance of 40-year-old infrastructure is what keeps me up at night," Erik says.

To pay for maintenance and upgrades, it is important that each utility — electric, propane, water, wastewater — break even and are self-sustaining. "When I came to Kirkwood seven years ago, some of our utilities were running in the red," says Erik. Water and wastewater, for example, relied on interfund loans, mostly from electric. His first-rate study for water and wastewater in 2020 moved those two utilities into the black. Erik is now leading a process to create a master plan for each utility — identifying biggest risks and capital requirements — which informs future rate studies. That in turn enables us to service the existing debt, over \$50 million, that KMPUD took on to finance the electrical grid connection and the upgrade to our wastewater treatment plant currently under construction.

Of course there's another appeal to the KMPUD job, for Erik, and that's Kirkwood itself. "My three kids were all on Jets, they raced for the Amador High School where my wife Gwen was the coach and two of them finished consistently in the top 10 for our region. Kirkwood was their home mountain. It was pretty cool to be able to walk from the office to watch them race."

Finally, when asked if he had any wisdom from his commute down to Amador, Erik had a quick response: "Plasse's Resort! The food is good, the head chef's a friend, and when I'm driving home on a Friday, I see friends heading the other way, to Kirkwood for the weekend."

Wastewater Plant

We continue to share the progress of KG Walters Construction Co. on the Wastewater Treatment Plant Repair and Rehabilitation project.

The work continues on schedule. Most of the project will occur inside the building, so while there will be more activity now that it is spring-summer weather, most will not be visible from outside.

KMPUD Staff has moved back into their new offices and continue their daily operations.



Clearing Vegetation Around District Infrastructure

KMPUD crews will be doing vegetation management in utility easements throughout the Valley this summer. Work is scheduled this Summer. KMPUD has easements throughout the valley over utility pipes and lines and around surface mounted equipment, such as electric transformer boxes. To ensure the reliable, safe delivery of utilities, KMPUD must manage the vegetation on these easements.

Typical vegetation management that you can expect see includes removing vegetation in a four-foot radius around surface equipment and removing trees and shrubs from easements above utility pipes and lines so that roots don't grow into the infrastructure and cause damage to equipment, or in the case of sewer lines, sewage spills.

This work will be done with hand and power tools. If you have questions, please call the District office at (209) 258-4444

Irrigation Water on in June



The District provides irrigation water to our customers who have irrigation service during the summer months. This water is delivered by dedicated meters separate from the domestic water in your house.

Each year, all irrigation water typically is turned on in June and turned off four months later in October. These dates may vary from year to year due to snowpack or anticipated early snow fall.

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